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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 KATHMANDU 000089

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SA/INS AND DS/IP/NEA  
STATE ALSO PLEASE PASS USAID/DCHA/OFDA  
USAID FOR ANE/AA GORDON WEST AND JIM BEVER  
MANILA FOR USAID/DCHA/OFDA  
LONDON FOR POL/REIDEL  
TREASURY FOR GENERAL COUNSEL/DAUFHAUSER AND DAS JZARATE  
TREASURY ALSO FOR OFAC/RNEWCOMB AND TASK FORCE ON TERRORIST  
FINANCING  
JUSTICE FOR OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL/DLAUFMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PHUM PTER CASC PGOV NP IN

SUBJECT: NEPAL: UPDATE ON MAOIST ACTIVITIES, JAN 11-17

SUMMARY

1. Progress toward Government-Maoist peace talks reportedly is at a standstill. The Government of Nepal announced the creation of a 20,000-man task force to combat the insurgency. The GON responded to criticism over food distribution programs and human rights abuses. Human Rights Watch released its annual report on January 14, citing human rights violations by both the GON and the Maoists as other organizations demanded more international involvement. Maoists killed two policemen and injured four others, and also killed a soldier. An eight-year-old girl was killed after being used as a human shield by the Maoists, and several other children were injured in a clash between security forces and Maoists. Maoists abducted several workers from the CPN-UML and burned down the residences of several government officials. Maoists also have started issuing identification cards and refusing entry into Rolpa District to those without them.

PEACE TALKS STALLED

2. Prime Minister Lokendra Bahadur Chand told the press on January 11 that no progress had been made in bringing the Maoists to the negotiating table. Chand said the Government of Nepal (GON) remained committed to resolving the conflict but there were no new "significant developments." The GON has not responded to the Maoist agenda for talks, which includes a round-table conference, an interim all-party government, and elections to a constituent assembly.

3. Sudeep Pathak, one of three members of a committee formed to facilitate dialogue between the Maoists and the GON, expressed concern that there would be more bloodshed if the talks do not materialize. Pathak warned that Nepal would be turned into a battleground if the GON, Maoists and civil society continue to deny the seriousness of the current crisis.

4. Human Rights Organization of Nepal (HURON) issued a memorandum to the GON requesting information on the location of three Maoist leaders, one of whom is the leader of the All Nepal National Free Students Union-Revolutionary (ANNFSU-R), as a gesture to create a favorable environment for dialogue. HURON criticized the GON's attitude, saying it was inhibiting the prospects of peace, and appealed to the GON to take the initiative to reach a peaceful solution.

GOVERNMENT FILES CASE AGAINST MAOISTS,  
CREATES TASK FORCE

5. The Government of Nepal (GON) filed special court cases against ten senior Maoist leaders, including Pushpa Dahal (aka Prachanda) and Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, accusing them of being the "chief perpetrators of crimes against the state." The GON is seeking warrants against the ten Maoists and demanding life imprisonment for the violence and terror they have caused.

6. The GON announced that a special task force, comprised of twenty thousand army and police personnel, was preparing for deployment to areas hit hardest by the Maoists. According to press reports, the task force is being trained to use newly acquired weapons from the United States and Belgium, and are expected to complete training next month, at which time deployment would start.

PEACE ELUSIVE, HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES ABOUND

7. Human Rights Watch, an international human rights group, issued its annual report on January 14, and said that the

international community needs to pay more attention to the "cycle of slaughters" by the insurgents and reprisals by government forces. The group declared that the Maoists and the GON are guilty of severe human rights abuses against civilians including detention, torture, abduction and execution. The report also criticized the abuse of basic freedoms such as press and assembly, citing the imprisonment of over 130 journalists, some of whom remain in custody even after the expiration of the state of emergency (Note: The state of emergency was lifted in August 2002.)

18. Murari Raj Sharma, Nepal's representative to the United Nations, told attendees at the UN Security Council meeting that the Maoists have turned children into "sacrificial lambs," and were preventing the development and advancement of Nepal. Sharma also demanded more involvement of the international community to stop the misery and death faced by children in Nepal. Four non-governmental organizations, including Child Workers in Nepal (CWIN), announced the launching of "Children as a Zone of Peace" campaign, designed to help children affected by the Maoist insurgency. Gauri Pradhan, President of CWIN, said the campaign would work to provide basic needs such as food, shelter and education to children, and counseling services as well. Pradhan said over 4,000 children have been displaced and over 2,000 have been orphaned as a result of the insurgency.

19. In a separate January 14 report, compiled from government and human rights organizations statistics, Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC), a local human rights group, said 7,383 people have been killed and thousands displaced since the start of the insurgency. INSEC reports that both the government and the Maoists are responsible for killing children, teachers and civilians. Dang District in the Western Terai has been hit especially hard and, according to INSEC, the human rights situation there is "pitiful." INSEC reported a sharp increase in violence and murder in Dang District by the Maoists, who wish to make the district a new training and staging area.

10. Nayan Bahadur Khatri, Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), said peace in Nepal remains elusive while human rights violations continue. Citing the lack of basic civil and political rights, Khatri said the NHRC would work to promote human rights through education, and also protect rights through monitoring and complaint investigations.

#### INSURGENCY CONTINUES TO CLAIM INNOCENT LIVES

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11. On January 16, Maoists entered a Community Police Center in Patan, the city adjoining Kathmandu on the south, and shot a police officer to death. They also detonated three small blasts, which caused damage inside the building. On January 15, in Kailali District, Maoists abducted a soldier with the Royal Nepal Army (RNA) from his home and brutally killed him. An eight-year-old girl was killed after reportedly being used as a human shield by Maoists during a clash with security forces in Bhojpur District. Four other children were also seriously injured in the crossfire. On January 12 Maoists shot and killed a Village Development Committee secretary in Rautahat District after dragging him from his home in Gaur. Four policemen were injured after being ambushed by Maoists in Taplejung District on January 12. Maoists abducted and later killed a policeman in Pyuthan District on January 11. A commercial pilot for Air Ananyan was shot and wounded on January 11 by assailants, suspected to be Maoists, as he left his home in Kathmandu for an early morning jog. Maoists had attacked the same pilot a year ago and warned the airline to stop flying security personnel.

12. Maoists targeted Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) workers over the weekend. On January 11 the insurgents attacked a mass meeting of CPN-UML workers in Bhojpur District and abducted several workers. The insurgents also detonated a bomb in Dang District on January 11 at a local meeting of CPN-UML workers. Madhav Kumar Nepal, general secretary of CPN-UML, condemned the attacks and called for the immediate release of the activists who were abducted.

#### PROPERTIES DESTROYED BY MAOIST VIOLENCE

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13. On January 16 Maoists detonated three bombs and set fire to the home once occupied by former Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa in Dhankuta District in East Nepal. The house was completely destroyed, causing a loss of over a quarter of a million dollars. On January 12 Maoists also set fire to an army official's residence in Nuwakot District and a Nepali Congress (NC) activist's residence in Rasuwa District, both north of the Kathmandu Valley.

14. In Rolpa District, the Maoist heartland, militants are

issuing identification cards and refusing entrance to villagers who do not have one. Those without identification cards have been taken hostage and robbed of their possessions and money. According to the Mid-Western Regional Administration Office, 1700 people have been displaced from their homes in the mid-west region as a result of the insurgency, with the highest number, 741, being from Rolpa District.

15. According to press reports, local villagers throughout Nepal face not only violence and/or abduction by Maoists, but also close identity checks by security forces. Villagers fleeing from the Maoists are faced with harassment by security forces if they cannot produce identity cards, which they often are unable to obtain because their Village Development Committee offices have been abandoned.

#### FOOD DISTRIBUTION JEOPARDIZED BY INSURGENCY

16. The Government of Nepal (GON), facing criticism for not distributing food supplies, explained that security concerns, such as the looting of storage facilities and supplies by Maoists, are hindering programs. According to the latest figures, Maoists have damaged storage facilities and looted food supplies worth more than 300,000 dollars. The Nepal Food Corporation, which distributes the food, has requested additional security for the contractors who deliver the supplies. In Jumla District, there are reports that food supplies are not being delivered out of fear that they will fall into the hands of the Maoists. Dr. Shankar Sharma, Vice-Chairman of the National Planning Commission (NPC), admitted that the supply of food grains is lacking due to security concerns, but claimed the GON is attempting to remedy the situation.

MALINOWSKI